



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS
Urges Visitors, Residents To Be Safe During The July 4th Holiday

RALEIGH - Gov. Mike Easley announced today that North Carolina is continuing a 231-year tradition of celebrating the Fourth of July with special events from the mountains to the coast. The governor has also called on local communities to commemorate the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence by participating in the national bell ringing ceremony at 2:00 p.m. eastern daylight time.

"North Carolina's communities take pride in observing our nation's independence and the state has been officially commemorating it since the 1780s," Easley said. "Celebrations large and small are held throughout the state and I encourage everyone to enjoy this all-American holiday."

July is traditionally the month with the highest hotel occupancy for North Carolina and summer holiday travel is a large part of the state's \$15.4 billion travel industry. July also typically sees the largest number of trips to and within North Carolina. In 2006, 11.3 percent of trips were taken in July. The next two busiest months are May (10.1 percent) and June (9.7 percent).

Easley encouraged visitors and residents alike to be safe during the holiday. "I am reminding everyone to buckle up, take frequent breaks when driving long distances and to observe appropriate safety precautions around barbecue grills and fireworks."

Here are some highlights from festivities around the state. For a complete list, go to www.visitnc.com/tools_calendar.asp.

- **Original Fourth of July Celebration** -- Winston-Salem features a recreation of North Carolina's first official Independence Day celebration, as observed in 1783, with the reading of the Declaration of Independence. Other activities from later years will be represented with Salem Militia forms on Salem Square and fire drills with the bucket brigade. (336) 721-7350; www.oldsalem.net
- **State Capitol Independence Day Celebration** -- Enjoy a family-oriented Independence Day celebration with a patriotic concert and picnic at the historic State Capitol. Music, dance, historical and military displays, crafts for adults and several hands-on and play activities for children round out this day of fun. Capitol Square, downtown Raleigh. 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Free. (919) 733-4994
- **Fourth of July Fireworks in Halifax** -- The Provincial Congress meeting in Halifax County in April 1776 made North Carolina the first colony to formally call for their delegates to declare independence from Great Britain. That history is celebrated through the outdoor drama *First for Freedom*, which will be performed on the steps of the new Halifax County Courthouse. The show